

## Against the Grain

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# Booklover-Burnt by the Sun

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## Book Reviews from page 43

librarians/archivists and collectors/donors. That sentiment is a unifying theme expressed throughout the collected essays as well.

The first of three sections, Part I consists of six essays on the changing roles of special collections professionals from the varied perspectives of collectors, donors, librarians and archivists. A practical essay by **Jim Kuhn** (University of Rochester, River Campus Libraries), for example, discusses best practices related to acquisitions, particularly of gifts-in-kind, such as the value of posted collection policy statements *not* limited to building upon existing strengths and of collaboration with neighboring and regional institutions. **Melissa A. Hubbard's** essay on community-based collections is a case study of the **Cleveland Play House** archives gifted to **Case Western Reserve** in 2012. It offers valuable insights into the ways in which special collections professionals can not only provide institutional researchers with access to community history, but also build on-going relationships with the communities that originally collected the materials and that continue to make use of them.

The seven essays in Part II focus on ways in which digitization and digital scholarship influence collections and use of physical materials. Scholar and bibliophile **Paul Ruxin** makes an impassioned plea for the special collections library to be "the center for the underutilized, underappreciated, understudied, but profoundly learned discipline of descriptive bibliography," (p. 70) that is, the close physical description

of a book or other printed material as object, including details of typography, binding, paper, etc. He argues that the practice of descriptive bibliography integrates the book as text and the book as object, providing information that cannot be discerned from a digital surrogate and that immeasurably benefits users of special collections materials. On the other hand, **Alice Schreyer** (**Newberry Library**) writes that when a large collection of historic Homer editions was donated to the **University of Chicago** (where she was then Associate University Librarian for Area Studies and Special Collections) in 2007, a decision was taken to publish a scholarly catalog of the collection highlighting copy-specific information and studying translation history and the transmission of the text through editions. Her essay goes on to relate how several bibliographical puzzles that emerged in the course of working with the donation were solved, in one case with crowd sourcing and digital corpora. **Stephen Enniss** (Harry Ransom Center, **University of Texas**) explores the challenges posed by born-digital materials that are appearing in author archives in an engaging essay that concludes the section.

The four essays that make up Part III focus on the new, front and center role of special collections in the academic library landscape. Provost Professor of English **Christoph Irmischer** (**Indiana University-Bloomington**), for example, shares details of a special collections-based capstone course he taught using the resources of the **Lilly Library**, including descriptions of fascinating student projects. **Irmischer's** essay, like many in this volume, will inspire special collections librarians and archivists as well as librarians with subject expertise or technical knowledge that are interested in collaborating with them. 🐾

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## Booklover — Burnt by the Sun

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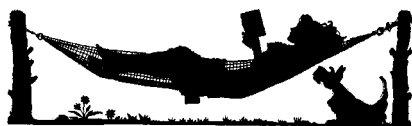
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**T**he 1994 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film was awarded to a Russian film entitled "Burnt by the Sun." I attended a showing of this film in Charleston at one of the small indie theaters that functioned in Charleston during the 1990s. I had the privilege of being in the company of Russian speaking friends who immediately gave me a perspective of the meaning of the film's title. Stand too close to an idea, philosophy, concept, dogma, or teaching and you can be "burnt." The critics of the film describe the sun as **Stalin** and "burnt" as losing oneself inside a totalitarian regime. Seeing **Ivan Bunin's** short story entitled "Sunstroke" in "Great Stories by Nobel Prize Winners" reopened my memory of this film. I was "burnt" by this movie and "Sunstroke" was drawing me into the sun again.

**Ivan Alekseyevich Bunin** won the 1933 **Nobel Prize in Literature** "for the strict artistry with which he has carried on the classical Russian traditions in prose writing." He had the distinction of being the first Russian writer to be honored with the prize

and the Parisian community celebrated with accounts in the newspaper: "You see, up until then we, émigrés, felt like the bottom stuff there. Then all of a sudden our writer was being given an internationally acknowledged prize! And not for some political scribbles, but for real prose!" Oddly, the date is mistakenly noted as 1931 in "Great Stories by Nobel Prize Winners" which speaks to the strict necessity of proofreaders and vetting. But I digress. **Bunin** was born in the province of Voronezh, Russia in 1870. According to his autobiography, he was from an "old and noble" house that produced politicians, artists, and poets. Rural life experiences were dominant in his writing. His travels through the Ukraine enhanced the introduction to folklore given to him by his mother. However, it was **Tolstoy**, one of **Bunin's** influencers and inspirers, who cautioned him from "total peasantification." **Bunin** died "stateless" in Paris, France in 1953.

He self professed the difficulty of living in "the new world" of post — Bolshevik Russia.



In the short paragraph introduction to "Sunstroke," **Somerset Maugham** describes this little piece of prose as one of the world's best stories. How can you not be intrigued? The story opens:

"They had had their dinner, and they left the brilliantly lighted dining room and went on deck, where they paused by the rail. She closed her eyes and, palm turned outward, pressing her hand to her cheek, laughed with unaffected charm. Everything was charming about this little woman." The lieutenant fascinated with this "little woman" with her sunburn smell suggested exiting the boat once it docked for an interlude. His desire for her to stay afterwards and her desire to continue her cruise without him was punctuated with the thought — "Please believe me, I'm not at all the sort of woman I may have led you to think. All that happened here never happened before and never will again. It's as if I suffered an eclipse...Or, to be more precise, it's as if we both experienced something in the nature of a sunstroke."

I am grateful to my Russian-speaking friends who gave me not only the translation to the film's title "Burnt by the Sun" — "Утомлённые солнцем" (*Utomlyonnye solntsem*, literally "wearied by the sun"), but also the perspective of its meaning. On occasion, I have been "burnt" by amazing prose that made me pause. Cure for a sunburn, sunstroke, or too much sun? Continued diversity of my reading material. Thank you Nobel laureates. 🐾

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## Rumors from page 40

the survey was carried out in partnership with 10 publishers including **Cambridge University Press**, **The IET**, **De Gruyter** and **SAGE Publishing**. The survey, which had over 7,500

researcher respondents, shows that usage of scholarly collaboration networks (SCNs, such as ResearchGate and Academia.edu), for uploading articles is widespread, and that accessing full text content is the primary reason, ahead of finding and connecting with other researchers.

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